

Meiji Co., Ltd.

October 23, 2024

Strengthening Relations Towards New Value Creation Through Research in Lactic Acid Bacteria and Gut Microbiota

Meiji Signs Long-Term Joint Research Agreement with LB Bulgaricum – Establishing a New Joint Research Laboratory in Bulgaria –

Meiji Co., Ltd. (President and Representative Director: Katsunari Matsuda) is pleased to announce that we concluded a 10-year long-term joint research agreement with LB Bulgaricum PLC (CEO: Zhivko Zhivkov, hereinafter LBB), a state-owned company of the Republic of Bulgaria (hereinafter, Bulgaria). The agreement was signed at a ceremony on Wednesday, October 16 in Bulgaria's capital of Sofia. Together with LBB, Meiji will establish a new joint research laboratory to promote advanced research related to deliciousness, health, and quality as we strive for new value creation for lactic acid bacteria and yogurt.

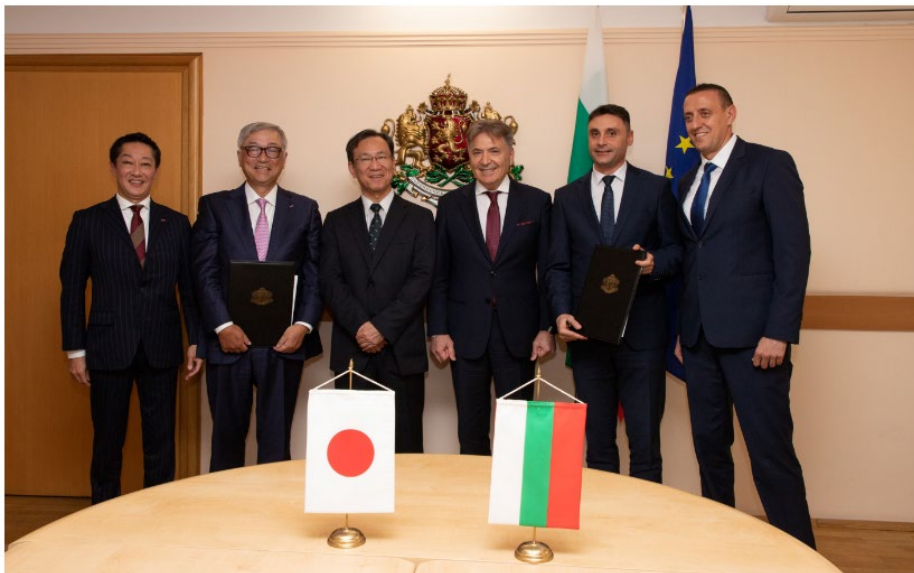


Photo of signing ceremony

From right: LBB CEO Zhivko Zhivkov, Deputy Minister of Economy and Industry David Sukalinski, Minister of Economy and Industry Petko Nikolov, Ambassador of Japan to Bulgaria Hisashi Michigami, Meiji Holdings Director and Executive Officer Shigeru Taniguchi, and Meiji Global Dairy Business Division General Manager Taiji Shonozaki

Inspired by the Osaka World Expo held in 1970, Meiji took on the challenge of recreating the taste of yogurt from Bulgaria, one of the birthplaces of yogurt. Following much trial and error, we eventually launched sales of Japan's first plain yogurt in 1971. Then, in 1972, we gained permission from Bulgaria to use the country's name. The following year, in 1973, we launched Meiji Bulgaria Yogurt, which has become a regular part of the food lifestyles of our customers. For over 50 years, Meiji has built positive relations with Bulgaria and this latest long-term joint research agreement will serve to further strengthen those relations.

Through the new research laboratory, we will strive for new innovation and creation. We will engage in research that combines the latest in scientific technology with Bulgaria's traditional food

culture, which is linked to eternal youth and longevity, and the vast lactic acid bacteria and other genetic resources at the root of that food culture. We will then apply the knowledge gained through these research activities to contribute to daily health of customers by offering products that provide new health value.

[Details of collaboration initiatives]

- (1) Jointly establish a new research laboratory featuring advanced research equipment in the capital of Sofia
- (2) Dispatch Meiji researchers on long-term assignment to Bulgaria to engage in research activities in the fields of deliciousness, health, and quality
- (3) Collect new microorganisms from within Bulgaria to expand research resources
- (4) Develop new starters for yogurt that offers superior flavor, physical properties, and quality
- (5) Study healthy longevity with a focus on research related to gut microbiota

[Future plans]

Future activities will include designing the new joint research laboratory and selecting the latest scientific and genetic analysis equipment required to promote joint research. Prior to the establishment of the research center, we will stimulate interaction between the researchers of each company by promoting joint research activities using the existing research centers of each company.

About LB Bulgaricum PLC

LB Bulgaricum is a state-owned business that manufactures and sells dairy products in Bulgaria, and sells dairy products and its starters internationally. Meiji has a long-standing positive relationship with LB Bulgaricum. In addition to granting Meiji the brand license for Meiji Bulgaria Yogurt, LBB has previously engaged in joint research activities with Meiji even prior to this most recent agreement.

#####